

3 dead, 300 injured in Argentine blasts

CORDOBA (AFP) — A series of devastating explosions ripped through a state munitions factory in the central province of Cordoba Friday, killing at least three people and injuring nearly 200 others, authorities said. Flames rose a hundred metres into the sky as continuing detonations sent clouds of dust into the air over Rio Tercero, Cordoba, according to a radio reporter who overflowed the disaster scene in a helicopter. Houses near the Rio Tercero military factory were heavily damaged, the reporter for LV3 radio said. The first explosion erupted in the plant's powder depot at 9:00 a.m. (1200 GMT) and was followed by a series of blasts that grew in intensity and continued at intervals of 10 to 15 minutes for more than two hours. Gerardo Siroza, a worker at an adjacent petrochemical plant, said the first blast was of "terrifying magnitude," sending up a mushroom cloud over the town. Women and children fled to surrounding farmland after the explosions set off a wave of panic in the town some 700 kilometres northwest of Buenos Aires.

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Jordan Times

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King donates Asturias Award money to Jubilee School

AMMAN (Petra) — His Majesty King Hussein has donated \$40,000 to the Jubilee School of the Noor Al Hussein Foundation to help the school carry out its mission in the best manner. The donation represents the amount of the Asturias Award which was awarded to King Hussein in appreciation of the King's role in achieving peace in the region. The King was given this award at a special ceremony held recently in the Spanish state of Asturias.

Hungarian minister begins Jordan visit

AMMAN (Petra) — Hungarian Foreign Minister László Kovach, who is head of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, arrived in Amman Friday on a three-day visit to Jordan during which he will meet with senior Jordanian officials. Mr. Kovach said in a statement to Petra, that the main focus of his talks in Amman will be ways to enhance Jordanian-Hungarian cooperation in political, economic and cultural fields. Praising Jordan's key role in the Middle East peace process, the Hungarian minister described Jordan as an important partner for Hungary for two important reasons: first its political stability, and second its principled and balanced foreign policies in the Arab and Islamic world. The minister, who will visit several archaeological and touristic sites in the Kingdom, will hold a press conference on Saturday outlining the objectives of his visit.

Rifkind puts off Mideast departure

LONDON (AFP) — British Foreign Secretary Malcolm Rifkind has postponed his departure for a tour of the Middle East from Sunday to Monday because of a tight agenda, the Foreign Office announced Friday. Mr. Rifkind also changed his travel route and will now first visit Saudi Arabia, where he will stay until Tuesday. He will then travel on to Syria on Wednesday and to Israel and the occupied territories. Next Friday, Mr. Rifkind will go to Jordan. He will be in Egypt on the morning of Nov. 11 and in Lebanon the afternoon of the same day.

Tripoli denounces Israel-Qatar deal

TRIPOLI (AFP) — Libya urged Arabs on Friday to block Qatar's sale of liquefied natural gas to Israel, which it denounced as an affront to Arab unity. The official Libyan daily Al Zahr denounced what it described as the "extreme state of weakness of the (Arab) Nation," which has permitted a "country like Qatar to without shame or fear sign a cooperation accord with Israel, and in the absence of Arab reaction to this arrogance." Israel signed a memorandum of understanding earlier this week with the U.S. energy company Enron to buy up to three million tonnes of liquefied natural gas year from Qatar.

PNA bans Al Bilad

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Palestinian National Authority has banned a Jordanian weekly newspaper, Al Bilad, from entering the self-rule areas because it published a news report hinting that PNA President Yasser Arafat was involved in the assassination of Islamic Jihad leader Fathi Shaqaqi in Malta last week, sources said.

Pelletreau arrives in Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — U.S. Envoy Robert Pelletreau arrived here Friday to discuss the Iraqi situation and other Middle East issues with Kuwait leaders, the official KUNA news agency said.

PNA police hold Islamic Jihad suspects in new suicide blasts

GAZA CITY (Agencies) — Palestinian National Authority (PNA) police have arrested at least two supporters of the Islamic Jihad in the Gaza Strip after a double bombing wounded 11 Israelis, the militant group said Friday.

The suspects were seized at home during the night, the group said in a statement without saying how many were detained.

Palestinian security chief General Abdul Razek Al Majaida would only say that the self-rule authority had "taken preventative measures in the past days" to thwart any anti-Israeli attacks.

Two Palestinian suicide bombers died when their booby-trapped cars blew up near a crossing from Israel into the Gaza Strip, wounding 11 Israelis, most bus passengers on their way to work from the Naqib desert. One was "fairly seriously" wounded, the army said.

The double attack came a week after the murder of Islamic Jihad leader Fathi Shaqaqi on the island of Malta in a killing blamed on the Israeli secret services.

The Palestinian group vowed they would avenge his

U.S. Senate extends PNA aid for 30 days

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — The Senate has voted to extend U.S. aid to Palestinians for 30 days following the expiration of legislation that had been held up by a political dispute.

The aid programme ended at midnight Tuesday after lawmakers failed to renew the Middle East Peace Facilitation Act (MEPFA), which provides some \$100 million in aid and gives the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) authority to operate an office in Washington (see page 2).

The Senate voted late Thursday to extend the programme temporarily, sending it to the House of Representatives, where a vote was expected next week.

Earlier Thursday, the State Department said it was required to order the PLO to close its U.S. office in accordance with the law.

An 18-month extension of the legislation is contained in a larger foreign aid bill for fiscal 1996, which is being held up by a dispute over an unrelated amendment on abortion.

(Continued on page 7)

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — A stock-taking after last week's Middle East and North Africa (MENA) economic summit indicates that Jordan has largely achieved most of its objectives from the gathering, in its role as a host of the event as well as a key player in regional economic development.

Israel, Egypt and the Palestinians — the three other "core parties" in the Middle East along with Jordan — also appeared to have secured what they were aiming from the summit.

Judging from public comments by American officials, the U.S., the main force behind the summit and the ideas propagated and discussed there in terms of Arab-Israeli economic cooperation and international help for projects in the region that would reflect on people's daily lives, was also satisfied that the conference helped advance the regional economic effort.

The Europeans, grouped under the 15-nation European Union, kept their distance on a proposal to set

up a Middle East development bank, but made up for the deliberate shortcoming by assuming active roles on the private sector level.

Apart from announcing the establishment of the Middle East development bank, a regional business council and a regional tourism board — meaning a major step in institutionalising regional cooperation — the summit also decided to set up the general secretariat of the Regional Economic Cooperation Working Group (REDWG), one of the bodies stemming from the multilateral phase of the four-year-old Middle East peace process, in Amman.

It was not immediately known where the regional tourism and business council will be housed, but, according to Jordanian officials, the Kingdom will strive to house at least one of them. The officials say that setting up the REDWG secretariat was no more than a formality since such a group already existed in Amman, one of the leading players in the multilateral working groups.

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Most appear to have secured what they sought from Amman summit

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Also announced on the fringes of the summit was that Jordan had secured important international credit ratings that would allow the Kingdom to raise capital from a hitherto closed source — international pension funds and insurance companies which, by internal statutes, are banned from lending to countries which do not have enjoyed high credit ratings.

In general, most of the publicly signed agreements were prepared in advance but the focus on the accords gave the three-day conference an additional element of significance.

Such accords involved loan agreements for over \$300 million signed by Jordan with Japan and the World Bank — to help boost the Kingdom's foreign exchange reserves — and with the French government to help expand the transport sector.

Also significant was the

British announcement that

the London government

was opening a guaranteed

export credit line to Jordan

from a hiatus of six years.

The Jordanian Muasher

group and the international

hotel chain Hilton signed

death on Oct. 26 by killing Israelis.

One of the suspects arrested for Thursday's bombing is a man suspected of buying two cars used in the suicide bomb attacks.

Gen. Majaida, commander of the Palestinian police in Gaza, said the man was detained on Thursday night, several hours after the two suicide attacks.

He identified the man as a member of the Khalout family and said he was being questioned on his links to the bombings.

No one claimed responsibility for the attacks.

Palestine Liberation Organi-

zation (PLO) leader Yasser Arafat apparently is reluctant to crack down severely since the bombings came in response to the assassination of Shaqaqi.

"Our mission is to reduce such attacks through dialogue and explaining to them that these responses will negatively affect the peace process," said Gen. Majaida.

A leader of Islamic Jihad hinted in his Friday sermon that his group has carried them out to avenge the slain leader.

"Yesterday was the begin-

ning of the response and the

journey is long," Abdullah Shami, a clergyman, told hundreds of worshippers at Islamic Jihad's Al Qassim mosque in Beit Lahia, north of Gaza City.

In his sermon, Sheikh Shami scoffed at the self-rule government's calls for restraint and their warnings that more attacks against Israel could delay the expansion of autonomy to the West Bank.

"They are requesting that we remain silent so that we can return to the (West Bank)," Sheikh Shami said. "But we tell them that the land is not more precious than human beings ... that this could not happen at the expense of our dignity."

As part of the Palestinian government's conciliatory signals, Mr. Arafat on Thursday visited the Shaqaqi's family in the Gaza Strip to pay his condolences. Palestinian police also said a planned Islamic Jihad rally Saturday at a Gaza City sports stadium would go ahead as planned.

Still, Thursday's bombings were embarrassing for Mr. Arafat since they were planned and carried in PLO territory. Israel has warned that it would freeze its planned troop pullback in the West

Bank should Mr. Arafat not be able to rein in the militants and prevent attacks.

Israel filed a formal protest with Mr. Arafat over his failure to prevent the bombings, an Israeli military official said Friday.

Israeli officials told Mr. Arafat that after Shaqaqi's death there were repeated warnings of possible attacks, and that Mr. Arafat's security forces should have done more to prevent them, according to Israel radio.

However, Gen. Majaida said it would be difficult to prevent additional attacks because tempers were running high. "It would be impossible for us to stop them from retaliating, because he (Shaqaqi) was their leader," he said.

Another Palestinian commander, intelligence chief Maj.-Gen. Musa Arafat, has said "Shaqiqi's killing put an end to a 'gentlemen's agreement' between the group and the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) to halt anti-Israeli attacks for the time being."

A newspaper said Friday Shaqaqi told a friend shortly before his death that Zionist

(Continued on page 7)

Balkan leaders study Bosnia peace proposal

DAYTON, Ohio (Agencies)

Balkan leaders on Friday studied a peace blueprint of "hard choices," negotiators say, after a first day of talks dominated by territory and war crimes.

Meditators gave the leaders of Bosnia, Serbia and Croatia four draft documents, including a "framework agreement," they hope will be the backbone of a peace accord to end 3½ years of carnage in Bosnia.

"I expect the parties will take a day or two to look intensively at these documents... they represent the hard choices that will have to be made at the Dayton talks in order to reach an agreement," U.S. State Department spokesman Nicholas Burns said.

The other documents cover elections once the war is ended, constitutional issues and the separation of military and paramilitary forces, Mr. Burns said in Washington.

U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher has identified the election and constitutional issues as the most difficult facing the talks,

along with territorial questions.

The three leaders held a first private session of talks on Thursday and according to sources close to them raised the issues of justice for those accused of war crimes and the status of some territory that has traded hands.

Bosnian President Alija Izetbegovic pressed for Serbian leader Slobodan Milosevic, negotiating on behalf of Bosnian Serbs, to hand over indicted war criminals to an international tribunal in the Hague.

This would cover Bosnian Serb leader Radovan Karadzic and army commander General Ratko Mladic, both named by the tribunal. The U.S. government has already indicated the NATO forces might not be deployed in a peace force if the two are still in power.

Mr. Izetbegovic was also reported by Bosnian radio to have called on Serbia to intervene to stop Bosnian Serbs driving Muslims out of western Bosnia.

(Continued on page 7)

Home & Middle East News

JORDAN TIMES, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1995

U.S. to maintain pressure on Libya

WASHINGTON (Agencies) — The White House has vowed to keep the heat on Libya to hand over suspects in the Lockerbie bombing over Lockerbie, Scotland, as the victims' relatives denounced previous U.S. efforts as "feeble."

President Bill Clinton was to attend the ceremony Friday at the Arlington National Cemetery just outside the capital where the names of the 270 victims of the 1988 crash have been engraved on a granite monument donated by Scotland.

"He will talk about the ways in which we can keep the pressure up... even seek ways to tighten the pressure," said White House spokesman Michael McCurry.

Despite U.N. sanctions, Libya has steadfastly refused to surrender the two Libyans indicted in the bombing of Pan Am Flight 103 to be tried in the United States or Britain.

Mr. McCurry also said the administration would work to "keep others from trying to lessen the pressure."

He declined to name any particular countries, saying only "there have been from time to time within the Security Council some efforts to relax some of the sanctions."

But the spokesman also acknowledged the obstacles the United States faces in its campaign against Libya.

"There are, no doubt, additional things that could be done, but we have to work those issues diplomatically and gain support from others for that type of pressure to be effective," he said.

Such constraints have frustrated relatives of victims, who called on the U.S. government Thursday to make public all evidence it has against the two Libyans.

"After four years of failed efforts to extradite the Libyan terrorists, it is sadly apparent that this case will never be heard in a court of law," said Aphrodite Tsairis.

In a letter to President Bill Clinton and Attorney General Janet Reno, Mr. Tsairis and other members of a relatives group called "Terrorism Watch: Pan Am Flight 103" demanded that the Justice Department release all its evidence against the Libyans.

IJC voices alarm over Tunisia rights activists

AMMAN (J.T.) — The International Commission of Jurists (ICJ) has said that it is alarmed by a series of repressive measures taken by the Tunisian government against Tunisian parliament member and human rights activist Cherif-Chemmari and his wife Aya Cherif-Chemmari, a lawyer and human rights activist.

On Oct. 29, 1995, Mr. Cherif-Chemmari and Mrs. Cherif-Chemmari were prevented from leaving Tunis when they had their passports confiscated by a security officer at Tunis airport. They were on their way to attend a conference organised by the Mediterranean Centre for Human Rights in Malta. The security officer allegedly informed them that he had been instructed to prevent their departure and confiscate their passports, the ICJ said. No written justification for the confiscation was given to them.

The ICJ has written to President Zine Abidine Ben Ali, president of Tunisia, asking that the travel ban on Mr. Chemmari and Mrs.

byans.

"If the United Nations' and the United States' efforts are too feeble and half-hearted to bring the weight of the law against these cold-blooded murderers, we can at least bring the weight of moral shame against them and their protector, Colonel (Muammar) Qaddafi," said Burt Ammerman, another member of the group.

Members of the Terrorism Watch group said they would not attend Friday's dedication.

"We cannot be there with the president until the administration brings about the justice we speak of today," said Mr. Tsairis.

"We are aware that this is a very emotional time for the families," Mr. McCurry told a questioner. "The memorial itself is being dedicated in the spirit of trying to heal the wounds" of what Mr. McCurry termed a "tragic and outrageous attack upon civilians."

He noted that the cairn "is being offered as a gift from the family members, and he believes it is very right and proper to do so."

Mr. McCurry said the administration understands the dissatisfaction of families at the fact that two Libyans under indictment "have not been brought to justice, and indeed it is the view of the United States government that we must do everything that is possible to bring those suspects to justice. We have repeatedly pressed that issue, we have insisted that [Libya] not be granted any relief from the sanctions. Libya now faces until it is in complete compliance with the relevant (United Nations) Security Council resolutions. That will be our posture until we are satisfied that justice has been done."

Asked if he was saying that "no more could be done at present," Mr. McCurry answered sharply, "That is not correct. We are always pressing to find ways in which we can bring additional pressure on the government of Libya to release the two suspects for trial in either Scotland or the United States as required by U.N. Security Council resolutions."



CELEBRATIONS IN JENIN: Israeli soldiers keep order as West Bank residents celebrate the arrival of some 20 Palestinian officers in Jenin to replace Israeli forces in the West Bank town on Thursday. Some 1,000 Palestinian police will be deployed in Jenin by mid-November. Jenin is the first Palestinian town to be handed over to the Palestinian National Authority under the Sept. 28 accord signed between Israel and the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) (AFP photo)

Washington urges Congress to untangle PNA aid

WASHINGTON (USIA) — State Department deputy spokesman Glyn Davies urged Congress Wednesday "to act on the administration's proposal for a short-term extension" of the Middle East Peace Facilitation Act "as quickly as possible."

"The lapse of the authority limits our ability to provide assistance to the Palestinians," he said. "the PLO (Palestine Liberation Organisation) office, significantly, would also be required to do close."

"The peace process as a whole has been above politics in the past. We don't believe that the legislation so critical to the Middle East peace process should be held hostage to disagreements over how the foreign policy bureaucracy of the U.S. should be organised. Such a linkage is inappropriate at best because the lapse of the authority inhibits our ability to facilitate the peace process."

Senate majority leader Bob Dole announced Oct. 31 that Senator Jesse Helms, chair of the Foreign Relations Committee, was blocking an administration request for a short-term extension, which would have been the fourth this year.

Mr. Helms thereby added Palestinian aid to the appropriations Conference

satorial nominations and two major arms control treaties he is holding up because Democrats have blocked a Senate vote on his plan to eliminate three foreign policy agencies and consolidate them into the State Department.

The Middle East Peace Facilitation Act (MEPFA), an important tool of U.S. diplomacy, expired at midnight Oct. 31 due to a parliamentary manoeuvre in the Senate having nothing to do with the Middle East.

Mr. Helms, with the support of Mr. Dole, blocked the Senate from voting to temporarily extend MEPFA by objecting to an "unanimous consent request" required to bring up the legislation. Mr. Dole, in remarks on the Senate floor, said Mr. Helms would continue to object until the administration agreed to let his bill on reorganising the State Department come to a floor vote.

The MEPFA legislation allows President Clinton to waive certain provisions of U.S. law concerning the Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO), permits U.S. assistance to the Palestinian Authority, and allows a PLO office to operate in the United States.

The State Department, Mr. Dole pointed out, wanted Mr. Helms to lift his objection to proceeding with MEPFA "despite its almost total lack of effort over the

last 32 days" to deal with Mr. Helms. Mr. Dole said the administration "has refused to provide information to the Congress about cost savings" to be derived from a reorganisation of the foreign affairs report was approved.

Mr. Dole said Mr. Helms

"is completely within his rights to object to any unanimous consent agreement..."

Contrary to some of the statements by the administration, Senator Helms is not insisting "on getting his own way."

What he is insisting on

is that the will of the Senate

majority be heard and that

the Senate simply have a

chance to vote on whether to

to temporarily extend MEPFA.

Mr. Dole blamed the admini-

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The administration "refuses to

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ANC is sure of victory in S. African local elections

JOHANNESBURG (R) — President Nelson Mandela's African National Congress (ANC) was sure of an overwhelming victory in the country's first democratic local government polls, ANC officials said Friday.

"All the results as they are coming in... confirm the trends and throughout the country, it is an overwhelming victory for the ANC," party spokesman Carl Niehaus told Reuters.

Early results Friday showed the ANC had around 67 per cent of the total vote and controlled at least 133 councils country-wide.

Former President F.W. De Klerk's National Party (NP), which created apartheid in 1948 and dis-

mantled it nearly 50 years later, had 28 councils, and independent candidates 23.

About 28 per cent of the local authorities had reported results so far and counting was slow, officials said.

Mr. Niehaus said the ANC, which swept to power in last year's historic all-race parliamentary elections, had made gains in many traditional white areas and especially in the Western Cape province — controlled by Mr. De Klerk's NP after last year's polls.

"In the Western Cape it is a victory in the sense that there has been a substantial swing. We have gained almost every major town in the Western Cape," Mr.

Niehaus added.

In the Western Cape, the ANC had the majority in 12 councils. Independents had won seven and the National Party, six.

Election officials say

more than 60 per cent of registered voters turned out to cast their ballots in the nine provinces where voting took place, which compared well with the 30-40 per cent turnout in previous whites-only municipal elections.

The Liberal Democratic Party, the rightist Freedom Front and the pro-apartheid Conservative Party scored small victories, but many white voters swung behind the NP in polls that focused on grassroots concerns such as soaring crime.

Despite the ANC's diffi-

culties in fulfilling its general election promises of a better life for all after apartheid, most voters from the black majority endorsed the party that has led the country's unity government for the past 18 months.

The local elections will change the face of South Africa, with black power coming for the first time to local authorities that for decades were controlled by the old apartheid order.

Mr. Mandela, who came to power in last year's general elections, did not vote. The elections in Cape Town, where he is registered, in KwaZulu-Natal province and a number of rural areas were delayed due to demarcation disputes and logistical troubles.

Tests start on Armenia reactor's generator

YEREVAN (AP) — Armenia has begun testing the generator of a controversial nuclear power reactor in hopes of bringing the plant on line this month, an official said Thursday.

"The turbo generator is going to be under examination for a few days, and by mid-November we plan to connect the reactor to the country's power grid," said Zhasmina Gevondyan, a spokeswoman for the Energy Ministry.

Last week, the energy-starved former Soviet republic restarted the reactor at the Medzamor plant, which had been closed since 1989 in response to Armenia's devastating 1988 earthquake.

Officials said the nuclear plant would correct chronic electricity shortages and allow Armenia to use less natural gas, which it now must import.

The imports are expensive, and shipments are frequently disrupted as they

pass through neighbouring Georgia and Azerbaijan.

The latter of which has been at war with Armenia for nearly eight years.

Armenian homes currently have about 45 minutes a day of electricity, and most factories are closed or operate at a fraction of capacity.

Armenia's decision two years ago to reopen Medzamor triggered protests from Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey, which say it is unsafe. The plant is 30 kilometres west of Yerevan, and 12 kilometres from Turkey.

Yerevan insists the reactor is reliable, and the International Atomic Energy Agency said last spring it was satisfied with safety levels at the plant, which was built in 1979.

By month's end, the reactor is expected to generate 400,000 kilowatts of electricity a day. The government hopes eventually to restart Medzamor's second reactor as well.

Sparks flew and smoke filled a Baku subway car after its brakes overheated Thursday, just five days after a deadly underground fire that killed about 300 people, news agencies reported.

Passengers on the train were quickly evacuated, and there were no injuries, the ITAR-TASS and Interfax news agencies reported from the Azerbaijani capital, Baku.

The brake pads in one of the train cars overheated, filling the car with smoke, a subway official told ITAR-TASS. A similar incident took place Tuesday at another station in the Baku subway.

To prevent panic, people were ordered off the train at the Akademika Nauk

station, the reports said. The station was later reopened.

Passengers on the Baku subway are still nervous following Saturday's fire on a train between two stations that claimed about 300 lives and injured some 200 other people. Many people died from carbon monoxide poisoning.

Psychologists in Baku are reporting an increase in the number of patients, and the city ambulance service says the number of people suffering from heart attacks has shot up, the Turan News Agency reported.

One passenger fell giddy Thursday at one of the subway stations and fell on the rails. He was not seriously injured, but the incident disrupted service on one of the subway lines temporarily.

Conservatives lash out against Powell

WASHINGTON (R) — A coalition of conservative activists Thursday poured more vitriol on retired Gen. Colin Powell, apparently trying to scare him off running for the Republican presidential nomination.

The activists, most of them little known outside Washington political circles, said Gen. Powell was unacceptable to conservatives, either as a Republican presidential or vice presidential candidate.

He said Pyongyang continued to spend one-quarter of its gross national product on military forces and kept two-thirds of its 1.1 million troops within 100 kilometres of the demilitarized zone between the two countries.

"They have a clear option open to them of shifting their allocations of funds. They have not chosen to do this," he said. "As a consequence, it gets worse and worse for the people in even more desperate conditions." Mr. Perry said.

He said that communist

North Korea under leader Kim Jong-il was so far keeping its part of the nuclear agreement, but that Washington and Seoul would keep close watch on the 10-year pact under which South Korea has agreed to help build new power reactors for the North.

S.Korea to increase share of cost for U.S. troops

SEOUL (R) — U.S. Defence Secretary William Perry announced Friday that South Korea will increase its share of the cost of basing 37,000 American troops in this country by \$100 million over the next three years.

"They have agreed to increase the cost-sharing by 10 per cent a year over the next three years. We are proceeding in a spirit of true partnership," he told a press conference at the end of a five-day trip to Japan and South Korea.

South Korean Defence Minister Lee Yang-Ho told reporters South Korea paid about \$300 million of the \$1 billion annual cost of maintaining American forces in the country. That would increase to about \$330 million next year and to \$400 million by 1998.

Mr. Perry and Mr. Lee stressed, following annual high-level security talks between the two countries, that it was essential to keep the 37,000 U.S. troops in South Korea to deter any threat of an attack by North Korea.

The North agreed last year to scrap nuclear power reactors capable of producing material for atomic weapons, but tensions remain high on the Korean

peninsula because of a continued military buildup by Pyongyang, the ministers said.

"North Korea has serious economic problems so that basic food and social services are not available in sufficient quantity for its people," Mr. Perry told reporters.

He said Pyongyang continued to spend one-quarter of its gross national product on military forces and kept two-thirds of its 1.1 million troops within 100 kilometres of the demilitarized zone between the two countries.

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MIAMI HOSTAGE TAKER KILLED: Members of the Miami Police Department take a closer look at the body of an unidentified man who was shot dead by police while holding 13 school kids hostage in a school bus in Miami Beach. The hostages were unharmed (AFP photo)

8 dead as ship sinks off Denmark

HIRTSHALS, Denmark (AFP) — All eight crew members of a German cargo ship were feared drowned after the vessel sank in heavy seas early Friday off the northern coast of Denmark, Danish Rescue Services said.

The body of one crew member was found shortly after daybreak by joint Danish and Norwegian rescue teams.

Officials said they feared

that the other seven had also perished when the vessel went down shortly after 4:00 a.m. (0322 GMT).

The crew of the ship, the Maria I, comprised two Germans and six Filipinos, officials said. The nationality of the person confirmed dead was not immediately known.

A second distress signal followed seven minutes later before all contact was lost with Antiguan-registered ship.

MQM stages new strike in Karachi

KARACHI, Pakistan (R) — The ethnic Mohajir Qawmi Movement (MQM) staged its 22nd strike this year in Pakistan's southern port of Karachi Friday.

Witnesses said the sprawling city of 12 million people was tense but calm on a strike day that coincided with the Muslim weekend.

Security forces patrolled troubled eastern, western and central districts considered to be MQM strongholds.

The MQM called for a "day of protest and mourning" after Thursday's killing of 15 migrant workers by gunmen posing as policemen and the deaths of three MQM activists Wednesday.

Asked if the government might outlaw the MQM, he said: "It is no solution to the crisis. In case of a ban, they will go underground, which could prove more dangerous."

The MQM has denied involvement in the attack on migrant workers, one of Karachi's bloodiest in recent months.

Six other people were killed in Karachi Thursday.

Ethnic, political and sectarian violence has cost more than 1,650 lives in Pakistan's biggest city this year.

The MQM is fighting what it calls political and economic repression of Karachis' majority

Mohajirs — Urdu-speakers who fled from India when the subcontinent was divided in 1947 and their descendants.

Minister Abdullah Shah accused the MQM of slaughtering the migrants from Punjab province, but said the government had no plans to ban the organisation.

"The MQM is responsible for bloodshed in Karachi," he told a news conference in Karachi, capital of Sind province.

"We have proof that this party is involved in terrorism. Whenever there is normalizey, such incidents occur because they want to prove their presence."

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"We are still only receiving very sketchy reports from every province," a relief official in Legazpi said.

Angela is the fiercest storm to strike the Philippines since typhoon Nina killed 1,000 people in 1987.

It struck less than a week after typhoon Zack killed more than 160 people in the central Philippines and devastated rice and sugar crops.

Officials said more than 200,000 people, including 20,000 in Manila, had fled to safety in evacuation centres set up all over Luzon.

The storm cut communications, crippling efforts to assess the extent of damage caused by Angela.

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Traders said Angela, one of 20 typhoons on average that hit the Philippines every year, had destroyed hundreds of coconut trees in Bicol. Their reports sent to Legazpi said Angela had killed 11 more people were killed in the nearby town of Naga which was also inundated.

Rescue officials said 11 more people were killed in the nearby town of Naga which was also inundated.

Two boys were reported to have drowned in different parts of Manila but reports could not immediately be confirmed.

One person died on Catanduanes Island, off the coast of Bicol, which was the first community to feel Angela's wrath.

Some 15,000 flimsy wood and palm thatch homes were

blown away by the storm.

Philippine Airlines, the country's national carrier, said it expected flights to resume by late evening.

Report: Japanese hold back military know-how from U.S.

WASHINGTON (AP) — Japan is withholding important military know-how from the United States, and the U.S. government should reduce or eliminate political barriers to the flow of technology, said a report sent to Congress Thursday.

The report was issued by the National Research Council, a body created by

Congress to advise the government on science and technology.

"The time has passed when defence cooperation featuring primarily one-way transfers of technology from the United States to Japan could be justified," said the 126-page report of the council's defence task force.

Japanese industry has acquired significant military know-how and gained important footholds in aircraft and space technology, it said, but export-control policies of the Tokyo government have prevented the transfer of valuable technological advances.

Hummingbird is 'nature's strongman'

LONDON (R) — The hummingbird is the strongest man of nature with muscle-power almost nine times greater than a human's, scientists reported. Working on the aerial equivalent of a treadmill, two U.S. Researchers found that the power output by ruby-throated hummingbirds was remarkably high. Professor Robert Dudley and Dr Peng Chai of the University of Texas in Austin trained the birds to feed from a plastic tube where they pumped helium, a mixture of helium and oxygen used by deep-sea divers, to see how long they could sustain flight. The scientists, whose findings were reported in Nature magazine, discovered that the hummingbird's maximum power level was 133 watts per kilo of muscle compared to only 15 watts per kilo for humans. "Hummingbirds demonstrate considerable power reserves," they concluded after the tests.

Divine Brown starts jail term

LOS ANGELES (R) — Hollywood prostitute Divine Brown, who was caught having sex with British movie star Hugh Grant, has surrendered to the court to begin a 180-day prison sentence for parole violation. A court spokesman said Ms. Brown, 25, whose real name is Estella Marie Thompson, turned up at the Hollywood Municipal Court one day earlier than scheduled. After Grant's June 2



DUST COLUMN IN SPACE: The Hubble space telescope photograph released by NASA shows the top of the longest gas and dust column in the Eagle Nebula, 7,000 light-years from Earth in the constellation Serpens. The column of cool interstellar hydrogen gas and dust are also incubators for new stars, scientists say. The longest column has been estimated to be one light-year long (AFP photo)

Canada premier comes under attack

OTTAWA (R) — Prime Minister Jean Chretien, once Canada's most popular modern leader, is coming under scathing attack from all sides for underestimating the strength of Quebec's threat to leave the country.

Since the near-loss of

Canada's largest province in a referendum Monday, the separatists have said they will hound him in parliament, the opposition Reform Party has ridiculed his political judgment, and a former prime minister has called on him to sack his

advisers.

The only relief for Mr. Chretien is that his bitter rival over the future of French-speaking Quebec, separatist leader Lucien Bouchard, announced Thursday that he still has not decided whether or not to carry on the fight.

"We have a collective responsibility to keep it together...and I need the help of everybody to do that," Mr. Chretien told businessmen in Toronto Wednesday night.

He said Canada has had enough of interminable squabbles over Quebec.

"As the prime minister of Canada I will make sure that we have political stability in this land," Mr. Chretien said.

He even hinted at the possibility of leaving politics if Canada did not rally round his efforts. "For me, that's my last job...I will do whatever is needed to keep this country together and if you don't want me anymore, my wife will be happy," he said.

But Mr. Chretien's appeal fell on deaf ears in some quarters.

Instead of retreating in defeat, separatists pushed ahead. Mr. Bouchard said Thursday his Bloc

and launch a new bid for independence. Separatist Quebec Premier Jacques Parizeau announced his resignation the day after the narrow referendum defeat.

Shaken by how close Quebec came to secession, Mr. Chretien has now asked all Canadians to help keep it in the federation.

"It is a strategy I submit to you which brought this country to the very brink of disaster," Mr. Manning said Thursday.

Mr. Chretien intends to push through parliament language recognising Quebec as a "distinct society" for its French language and culture, and he has offered to give the province a constitutional veto.

But many English-speaking Canadians instinctively bristle at giving Quebec any special treatment and conservative former Prime Minister Joe Clark joined the chorus against Mr. Chretien.

"The crown expresses its profound regret and apologises unreservedly for the loss of lives because of the hostilities arising from its invasion, and at the devastation of property and social life which resulted," the bill says.

In this country, the term "the crown" refers to the New Zealand government.

Maoris still view the queen as guarantor of their rights under the 1840 treaty of Waitangi, by which their warrior ancestors ceded sovereignty to Britain in return for "full, exclusive and undisturbed possession of their lands".

"That's been a remarkably historic occasion and tremendously moving to have been at the signing of the Waitangi Raupatu Bill," Prime Minister Jim Bolger told reporters.

"It's a very fulsome apology, but given the history of the Waikato people a fulsome apology was deserved," he said.

NATO diplomats say the decision to go public appears to reflect anger at Mr. Chirac who has more or less publicly rejected Mr. Ellermann-Jensen and endorsed Mr. Lubbers.

France, which is not a member of the alliance's integrated military structure, appears to have angered some in the U.S. administration by trying to give the impression that its view counted for more than that of other countries.

"It's beginning to look like it's a French-run alliance, I think the Americans wanted to send a reminder the issue must be squared with them," said one alliance diplomat.

"It is extremely odd, it is simply not done like this and never has been," said one alliance diplomat.

But White House officials said the Americans saw

Queen Elizabeth signs bill to compensate Maoris

WELLINGTON (R) — One of New Zealand's largest Maori tribes received an apology signed by Queen Elizabeth Friday, laying a long-standing grievance to rest in a ceremony hailed as historic by both whites and Maoris.

The queen, who is New Zealand's head of state, signed a parliamentary bill which contains an apology by the government to the Tainui tribe based in the North Island's Waikato region for the military invasion of their lands in 1863.

Buckingham Palace and government spokesmen have stressed, however, that it is not a personal apology by the queen.

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"It's a very fulsome apology, but given the history of the Waikato people a fulsome apology was deserved," he said.

The queen's signature had huge symbolic importance for Maoris because she rarely gives royal assent to New Zealand bills in person. Typically her representative, the governor-general, signs legislation.

Mr. Bolger said the symbolism was more important than the signing. "It signals the resolution of a long-standing grievance and, as it were, putting forward the chance of a much better future. I felt a great sense of history in the room."

The signing was witnessed by a small gathering of tribal elders and cabinet ministers, including Dame Te Atairangikaahu, the Maori queen, who also met privately with Queen Elizabeth.

Clinton to in Brazil erie ad

NEIRO (R) — Clinton will be the star of a lingerie advertisement. An advertising agency in Brazil would feature a picture of his inadventently rt of her panties right skirt while using a recent

zil.

Clinton to in Brazil erie ad

Jordan Times

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Chairman of the Board of Directors:

MAHMOUD AL KAYED

Director General:

MOHAMMAD AMAD

Editor-in-Chief:

GEORGE S. HAWATMEH

Editorial and advertising offices:

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University Road, P.O. Box 6710, Amman, Jordan.

Telephone: 684311, 699634

Telex: 21497 ALRAI JO

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Zayed's timely plan

UNITED ARAB Emirates (UAE) President Sheikh Zayed Ibn Sultan is setting a fine example on how best to keep East Jerusalem Arab for all times. Sheikh Zayed has just announced plans to finance housing projects and cover medical and social needs of Arab Jerusalem in a bid to counter determined efforts by Israeli leaders to weed out Arab presence in the Holy City, whether it is Muslim or Christian.

Sheikh Zayed's move came on the occasion of the Jerusalem Week which was launched late last month in Abu Dhabi. That week, whose aim was to save East Jerusalem from Arab and international apathy, also represented a precious demonstration of Muslim-Christian solidarity on the future of the city. Pope Shenuda of the Coptic church, former Jerusalem Archbishop Hilarion Capucci and Egypt's Grand Mufti Mohammad Sayed Attiya Tantawi, have all lent their support in addition to Arab League Secretary General Esmat Abdul Meguid, Palestinian Minister in charge of the Jerusalem portfolio Faisal Husseini, Jerusalem Mufti Akram Sabri and Dr. Hanan Ashrawi.

There are several housing projects that have been authorised but still lack funding for their construction. In the new era of peace, Israel can ill-afford to reject Arab investment to reconstruct East Jerusalem. There is but one way to sustain Arab presence in Jerusalem and that is to rebuild the infrastructure of the east side in every conceivable way. The other Arab Gulf states, especially Saudi Arabia, can be expected to follow up on the plan by pledging equal amounts if not more to the effort. As a matter of fact all of us who are genuinely concerned about the fate of East Jerusalem are also invited to demonstrate our care by deeds not just words.

Here in Jordan we have every opportunity to pitch in both on the official and private levels. Funds provided into the proposed housing plans would be money well spent from a business as well as charitable points of view. Major financial institutions in the country starting with banks should spearhead the Jordanian campaign to come to the rescue of Arab Jerusalem.

This rare initiative by the UAE president personally and his country calls for reciprocity from other Arab circles. There is no better way to support Arab rights in Jerusalem than to build it up and satisfy its people's steadfastness and basic needs.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

DESCRIBING THE assassination of Fathi Shabiqi, leader of the Palestinian Islamic Jihad group, as a barbaric crime, a writer in Al Ra'i daily said that the reaction to this terrorist attack is bound to adversely affect the peace process. While the voices in many parts of the world are rising now demanding an end to all forms of terrorism, we find Israel going ahead with its state-organised terrorism, disregarding all humanitarian principles and the calls of the world community for peace and security for all individuals and societies, said Mousa Barhoumeh. The writer said the assassination of Shabiqi was clearly perpetrated by the state of Israel, which in the past committed other crimes like the assassination of Palestinian leaders, including Abu Jihad and Abu Iyad. The new crime is bound to fuel the resistance activity against Israel, especially as the late Shabiqi was not a common criminal but leader of a group that chose the struggle against the Israelis to end the occupation of Palestinian lands, said the writer. By committing crimes against the Palestinians, the Lebanese and others, said the writer, Israel is endangering the lives of its own citizens and inviting reprisals and more violence, which is detrimental to the Jewish state itself.

AFTER AL Adwan, a writer in Al Dustour, described a decision by the Amman economic summit to hold annual conferences in other capitals to pursue discussions of economic developments as one of the prominent results of the three-day gathering, which ended Tuesday. It is rather encouraging to see that the countries of the region are determined to transcend the bloody past and embark on a new era of cooperation to improve the quality of life and to secure a better future for the region, he added. But, he said, it remains to be seen whether such gatherings can serve as a substitute for the Arab summits and the Arab league, which have failed to deal with chronic issues that have been plaguing the Arabs for years. Indeed the man in

"we want to see if the new trend for holding such meetings on a scale unprecedented at the regional level will help fulfill the aspirations of the masses," he said. It is good to see different countries of the region launching cooperation to handle economic issues like poverty and unemployment and to chart plans for regional development, said the writer. But, he said, the Arab states can also revive the Arab League institution in order to attain similar goals through parallel routes not contradicting regional development but rather complementing this con-

Jordanian Perspective

By Dr. Musa Keilani

Hard work must follow MENA

AFTER MANY years, Jordan has hosted a major international event with flying colours. Notwithstanding the small little nuances, like the traffic jams and high security procedures, the Oct. 29-31 Middle East and North Africa (MENA) economic summit was a huge success not only as far as the organising part of the conference was concerned, where Jordan played the part of an excellent host, but also as in terms of contributing to the very concept of regional economic cooperation and an alliance between the private sector and government.

Jordan was host for many Arab and Islamic conferences during the 80s, and the Kingdom has a track record of being a fairly good host. But the MENA summit, an unprecedented event, surpassed most of our expectations. Those who were looking for loopholes and shortcomings to be used as a weapon against the government and supporters of the Middle East peace process failed miserably. That is a shining feather in Jordan's cap.

The reason that the success of the organising part of the summit needs special mention is very simple: Had the day-to-day running of the conference, in terms of logistics, went wrong, it would have been disastrous for Jordan because the international participants at the conference would have measured Jordan's ability to successfully live up to its commitments on the basis of those failures. And this would have had a none-too-significant impact on further considerations of the business opportunities available here. We have lived through it and we can now heave a sigh of relief.

As we absorb the warm feeling of success, let us remind ourselves that the summit was not in itself an end. It was not a one-time exercise to which every Jordanian contributed, directly or indirectly; nor was it an event that means that now having hosted it successfully, we could all go back to our lives.

We offered a great forum for government leaders and international, regional and local businessmen to sit down and look at the features on the ground in the region, the priorities of the various parties involved, the possibilities of business, chances for attracting foreign investment, and means of further developing the spirit of cooperation among the countries of a region, which have for long lived in conflict and bloodshed. Jordanians have indeed full faith in their private sector and the ability of Jordanian businessmen to follow up on what was discussed and seek out suitable partners and financing arrangements as well as whatever else is needed to launch business ventures. But that is simply not enough. What we also need is concrete government action to encourage the private sector by offering prompt official action and adopting measures that facilitate the private sector contacts.

It is simple logic that the private sector could discuss anything and come up with innovative ideas and projects. But this effort would get nowhere if there are bureaucratic

problems and legal hurdles that make little sense. But the key role played by His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, who is leading the new economic thinking of Jordan, and the active participation of every member of our government in the detailed discussions on complex subjects during the summit, give us enough optimism to believe that the executive authority will also rise up to the challenges of the day.

The summit has firmly placed Jordan in the international economic map. But pursuing the contacts that were established at the summit would require a lot of hard work by both the government and the private sector.

One of the main thoughts that haunted us in the run-up to the summit was about financing. It is one thing to draw up projects worth billions of dollars and present them, and it is a totally different thing to attract financing, given the stiff international race for capital. But as we saw at the summit, capital will be available if we could prove to those who have it that we offer everything that makes an international investor feel comfortable.

Among the many things that bothered the man on the street was how any international investor would bring in capital to Jordan, given the Kingdom's high per capita foreign debt. But the announcement that preceded the summit was and was again highlighted during the conference itself that two independent international agencies have given Jordan "above-average" credit rating in terms of the Kingdom's external and internal indebtedness gave us immense relief. For one thing, as it was pointed out to us, the rating now allows us access to an international pool of funds that was so far denied us. The assurance that our government offered us that this access will not be misused for consumption purposes was all the more comforting. It also put to rest our fears that the foreign debt factor might negatively influence investment decisions.

In a regional context, the establishment of institutions to guide regional economic cooperation was another notch in the quest to bring about a focused approach to regional development. It does not matter where those institutions will be based as big as Jordan and the rest of the region could work together to make the best use of those institutions. And, the way things looked, on the final day of the summit, everyone concerned was determined to achieve success in realising the very goals that are behind creating those institutions.

In short, Jordan and Jordanians have every reason to be proud of having hosted the MENA summit and to look forward to positive interaction with the international economic community to create new facts that would precisely serve the very objective of raising the standard of living of the people of the region and gradually eliminate the factors that opponents of peace use to propagate their defeatist theories.

THE WEEK IN PRINT

Summit success a major achievement for Jordan

Reviewed by Elia Nasrallah

The local press last week focused on Middle East and North Africa (MENA) economic summit which ended in Amman Tuesday, the question of Jerusalem and some domestic affairs.

AL RA'I daily said that the success of the Amman conference was largely due to the coordinated and strenuous efforts on the part of the public and private sectors. The success means that the two sectors are capable of working together and guaranteeing other successes in planning and executing projects not only in conferences, said the paper. Indeed, the Amman summit was a unique experiment for the Jordanian people who pooled their resources together to ensure success not only in the organisation of this international gathering but rather in the excellent creation of the required atmosphere for the business people and other guests enabling them to carry out their mission, the paper added.

The Amman summit was an event that opened the eyes of many officials and private sector people to the fact that the country is in bad need of a conference palace where delegations from around the world can meet and discuss politics, business and other affairs, said Bassam Haddadin, a writer in Al Dustour. While admitting that the conference was a real success in terms of preparation and execution, one cannot ignore the fact that Jordan lacks proper facilities for such huge gatherings, he argued. The country is in badly need for a multipurpose conference palace, where meetings to discuss the economy, politics and cultural affairs can be held, said the writer. It is not logical to ask political parties, the business community and professional organisations and others to hold their meetings in hotels and halls that were created for wedding ceremonies. He said the march towards democracy and openness should be coupled with adequate infrastructure.

It is up to the United States, which sponsored the Amman summit, to make its results successful and this depends on its willingness to offer financial assistance to the coun-

tries that were involved in conflict for so long, said Taber Al Adwan. The columnist, who wrote for Al Dustour, said that the Middle East is not in need of a theatre where the lights are focused on ambitious projects but it is rather in need of funds from the United States, Europe and Japan for the implementation of a Marshall-like development plan. If the conference has been used as a mere platform to help President Bill Clinton secure another term in office, then the people's frustration would increase and the conference would have adverse consequences, said the writer. He said that the Arab masses, who had seen the United States providing \$10 billion in guarantees for Israel to help it create settlements in Arab territories, are expecting tangible and concrete and practical steps to help the Arab region attain sustainable development and prosperity.

Describing the Amman summit as a forum that projected good opportunities for regional cooperation, a writer in Al Ra'i said the ball is now in the court of the Western advanced and rich nations, which can ensure success for such cooperation. Mahmoud Rimawi said that these countries can help by making available the required funds for the projected Middle East Development Bank and through soft loans to the countries of the region. But, he said, nothing can be guaranteed unless the lingering Israeli obstacles in the path of peace have been removed and the Middle East has enjoyed a comprehensive settlement benefiting all concerned parties without any discrimination.

A writer in Al Dustour blamed the Arab regimes in general and the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) in particular for Israel's disregard of the Arab and Muslim feelings over Jerusalem and the U.S. Congress's vote to move the American embassy to the city. Yasser Za'atreh said the Palestinian leadership, which deferred any discussion of the status of Jerusalem until the final stage of the negotiations, cannot blame the U.S. Congress for its decision.

I ruled out such thoughts when I remembered that our television is a government institution to the

Arab and Muslims regimes, which had failed to undertake an effective collective stand vis-a-vis the vote in the Congress, said the writer. So, he is in no position to voice a protest since they are now friends of the Jewish state. Had the Palestinians not signed the Oslo agreement with Israel, the U.S. Congress would not have taken this decision, argued the writer, who asserted that the Oslo deal was the gravest sin committed against Jerusalem.

Ibrahim Absi, a writer in Al Ra'i, said that the Arab countries should not remain passive vis-a-vis Washington's decision to move its embassy to Jerusalem. Jerusalem is not an ordinary city and the decision taken by the U.S. Congress is of grave consequences, said the writer, who urged the Arab states to confront Israeli leaders' drive to perpetuate their annexation of the Arab city and stand firm in the face of the U.S. Congress to prevent the move from taking place. The writer decided to conceal its intentions by showing its piety and that it is still faithful, and as if saying that no one of the believers should pay attention to those unimportant treaties because they are just political protocols that have nothing to do with religion.

The writer said that one difference, however, stands out between our government and the aforementioned guilty child. It is that our government never gets red-faced as it tries to conceal its sins, thinking that we are naive kids who are fooled by a sheikh's traditional head-dress and beard. Or maybe our government is still deceived by Carl Marx's saying that "religion is the opium of peoples," forgetting that Marx's saying is too outdated, said the writer. This, he said, makes the government the only party that gets high on its opium without us knowing it.

What we can now do, as citizens, is to implore God the Almighty not to make JTV more devout by making all its programmes religious, not because we are infidels, but because any such change will surely mean that the government has signed a merger treaty with Israel, said the writer.

According to participant officials, it is difficult to pin down the outcome of the talks that were made during the negotiations to discuss the proposals to dislodge the former East Germans. Edouard Balladur, the Gaullist prime minister be-

Traumatised by the new reality

By David March

PITY POOR France! A

Gallic conspiracy theorist, pondering the state of the nation, might ruefully imagine that France had been brought to its current low ebb by sleight of foreign hand. While nuclear test blasts echo fruitlessly around the south Pacific, at home the currency is languishing, economic growth declining, social divisiveness widening and confidence in political leadership crumbling. Could this be a product of a cunning plot to destabilise France by feeding it the illusion that the country could ignore the disagreeable realities of the post-cold war world? By seeking to tie the franc to the mark in a bid to hold down a unified Germany — a policy now coming more unstuck by the day — has France been lured into a position of economic and political infirmity by its neighbour east of the Rhine?

The truth is more prosaic. France is in a mess because of its own failure to make internal reforms to adjust to the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the ending of the U.S.-Soviet superpower system. External circumstances have changed, but France still wants to play the game of "Carry On as a Grande Nation" — exerting pivotal international influence without the pivot. Promising a colourful mix of nationalism, Europeanism, socialism, corporatism and liberalism, President Jacques Chirac took office in April either unaware or uncaring of the contradictions in his policies. Six months and a string of broken promises later, the full extent of the crisis facing France's society and its decision-making structures has been laid bare. Mr. Chirac has been hoist with the petard of his own hubris.

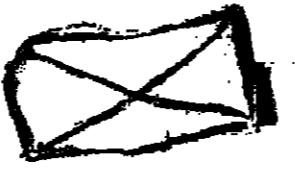
High short-term interest rates no longer support the franc. They depress it because the triple effect of lowering economic growth, pushing up government spending and further weakening the capital base of France's badly overstretched banking system makes the franc increasingly unsustainable in the eyes of the currency markets. France will be able to avoid a formal devaluation against the mark thanks to the wider currency fluctuation bands that were brought in during the 1993 summer flare-up in the European exchange-rate mechanism. But the next few weeks are likely to show that France is willing to trade a weaker franc — and (inevitably) the postponement of its plans for European monetary union — in return for lower interest rates and hopes of economic recovery.

As Le Monde delicately put it in an editorial on Friday, Britain, by lowering sterling's value against the mark in September 1992, provided an "example" that could "enrich" the French economic debate. Britain's devaluation, Le Monde pointed out, is one reason why the U.K. has 1 million fewer unemployed people than France. Unlike Britain in 1992, France has a low inflation rate and a current account surplus, but the overriding need to reduce interest rates indicates that the franc's link with the mark will shortly be "temporarily loosened" (as any Paris governmental euphemism would no doubt describe it).

Unfortunately for Mr. Chirac and Mr. Juppé, France's troubles cannot be resolved simply by Houdini-like unravelling of the mark knot. Reflecting shortages in skills, flexibility and capital in much of French industry, as well as the sluggishness of European export markets, France's immediate corporate prospects would receive only a modest boost from the franc depreciation. Further, a looser monetary policy would require France to toughen further budgetary rigour — a move already demanded by the Patronat employers' federation, which is likely to cause more pain all round.

France is in the uncomfortable position of knowing that, whatever action it takes on the economic front, the short-term consequences will be dire. This will be grist to the mill of Parisian conspiracy theorists. Anglo-Saxon foreign-exchange dealers taking an autumn break around the Champs-Elysées in the next few weeks should take out extra insurance cover.

The author is director of European strategy at Robert Fleming, the London-based investment bank. This Article is reprinted from the Independent.



Features

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Opportunities abound in healthcare sector

By Omar M. Latif

IN THE Mediterranean region, as elsewhere in the world, healthcare is viewed as a fundamental and inalienable human right. Health maintenance and disease prevention are increasingly receiving the same attention traditionally given to food, personal, environmental, and national security. Healthcare strategists are focusing on exploring applicable methodology that enhances cost-effective, high-quality healthcare delivery.

Jordan's medical schools have produced doctors who have been able to compete for admissions in some of the best residency programmes in the world. Postgraduate medical training conducted by the American and British-boarded specialists in cardiology, general and vascular surgery, infectious diseases, endocrinology and internal medicine of the Islamic Hospital and the Royal Medical Services are producing well-trained specialists.

On a regional basis, and perhaps on the international level, Jordan has distinguished itself in the quality and cost-effectiveness of healthcare delivery. Complex surgical and medical procedures are being carried out, successfully, at fraction of the cost to similar international centres. Cardiac and neuro-surgical operative charges are on the average 70 per cent less expensive than in comparable centres in the West.

Jordan's pre-eminence in medical services is multifactorial. Perhaps, one of the most important of those factors was the early focus that was given to the build-up of the human and material resources in the King Hussein Medical Centre. This centre is rightfully credited to be the facility that has graduated many of the excellent healthcare providers this country has. This centre has conducted complex medical procedures with great success rate. It thus has become a referral point for many of the countries in the region.

After completing their military duties, many of the key physicians and surgeons take up private careers in community hospitals, bringing with them expertise that has led to the setting of a new standard of quality care in private practice.

The fertile grounds for good medical care that has already been laid, encouraged the return of highly qualified doctors to Jordan after training and/or practising in the United States, Europe and other countries. Management of complex medical problems became possible in the public and private sectors.

Interventional cardiology grew at a rapid pace. Six active cardiac catheter labs are performing in excess of four thousand procedures annually. The number of open heart surgical procedures is steadily growing at a rate of 10 per cent a year, reaching to about 2,500 cases annually. Other surgical and medical specialities grew equally strong. Highly qualified neurosurgeons, plastic and reconstructive surgeons, pulmonologists, nephrologists, internists, oncologists, general and sub-specialist surgeons contributed to the rapid overall growth.

The following projects are presented for examination and potential deployment:

1. Electronic medical data exchange.
2. Private nursing school for Jordan's private hospitals.
3. Medical equipment assembly plant.
4. Radio therapy unit at Jordan Hospital.

Morocco moves to keep up momentum of Amman summit

RABAT (R) — Morocco, elected to host the permanent secretariat of the Middle East and North Africa Economic Summit, has wasted no time in publishing a programme to promote regional trade and investment.

A day after the summit of politicians and businessmen ended in Amman, the secretariat issued broad outlines of its strategy to boost economic cooperation and attract private investment to the region.

Mostafa Terrab, the secretariat's secretary-general, told Reuters Thursday that image-building was a key to promoting investment in an area that was getting far less than its share of foreign direct investment.

Mr. Terrab said the secretariat's role would differ from

that of the new Middle East bank, whose creation was announced in Amman, by focusing on small businesses rather than grandiose infrastructure projects.

"The role we see will be different. Our mission is to promote investment by image building for the region. The idea being that there is a gap between what the region attracts in terms of investment and what it should be receiving," Mr. Terrab said.

"This is an image problem," he added.

A summit paper says the Middle East and North Africa have not benefited fully from the rapid growth of foreign direct investments into developing countries.

It said that with few exceptions, like Morocco and

Tunisia, most countries in the region received insignificant amounts of investment considering their level of development and the size of their market.

Mr. Terrab admitted that the violence in neighbouring Algeria had had a negative impact on Morocco's image as a stable country.

He also insisted there was a need to maintain a regional approach when trying to attract foreign investment.

"The programme is based on a realisation that there is a negative economic domino effect that countries have on the investment climate... countries are suffering due to negative events in the region and the programme intends to reverse this domino effect," he said.

It said that with few exceptions, like Morocco and

U.S. needs budget surplus, not balance — Greenspan

NEW YORK (Agencies) — The drive to balance the federal budget is just a first step as the country will need an actual surplus in the next century to cope with a growing population, Federal Reserve (Fed) Chairman Alan Greenspan has said.

In an address in New York, Mr. Greenspan said he was optimistic that the White House and Congress would find a way to end their concerted battle over the budget "in the reasonably near future."

President Bill Clinton has threatened to veto the Republican plan to eliminate the deficit by 2002, charging that it is too heavy on social spending cuts while offering tax cuts to the rich.

But Mr. Greenspan also said balancing the budget would not be enough.

"We should think seriously about moving the budget into surplus in the early part of the next century to help foster the accumulation of productive assets to meet the retirement needs of today's working generation," he said.

The Fed chairman said it would be necessary to plan a course of action to deal with the current account deficit which will emerge at the start of the next decade due to population growth.

"Laws enacted with effects delayed for fifteen to twenty years are likely to be decided more rationally con-

structed than when a crisis is much closer at hand," he said.

Meanwhile, the U.S. economy is already starting to feel the bite from the big budget cuts promised by the Republican-led Congress — and they have not even been signed into law yet.

Economists reckon that growth in the fourth quarter could be reduced by as much as a half per cent by the drive to balance the budget and slash government spending.

"There's going to be a drag on the economy," said Douglas Lee, chief economist at Hong Kong Shanghai Bank Corp.'s HSBC Washington Analyst Group.

But much — if not all — of that drag could be offset next year when hefty tax cuts proposed by the Republicans are expected to kick in, economists said.

The Clinton administration and the Republican-led Congress are still squabbling over the budget for the current fiscal year that started Oct. 1.

But in the meantime, the government has been operating under a so-called continuing resolution that has kept a tight rein on outlays. That resolution is due to run out Nov. 13, but is likely to be extended as the administration and Congress try to work out a budget.

The economy already looked set to slow down in the fourth quarter after an unexpected 4.2 per cent surge

in the third quarter, and the government cuts will only aggravate that, economists said.

David Wyss, senior economist at Massachusetts-based Consultants DRI/McGraw Hill, said he expects growth to slow to about two per cent in the current quarter, in part because of the tight spending curbs in the continuing resolution.

Economists differ on the size of the impact from the reduced outlays, with some playing down its significance but others like Mr. Lee saying it could trim growth by half per cent.

The exact impact of the spending curbs on the economy is uncertain because it is not clear how individual government agencies will react to the continuing resolution. Will they cut back sharply on outlays, or will they assume their spending authority will be restored once a budget deal is struck?

Economists generally agree though that the economy will benefit in the long-run from a balanced budget because it will free up money for use by the more efficient private sector.

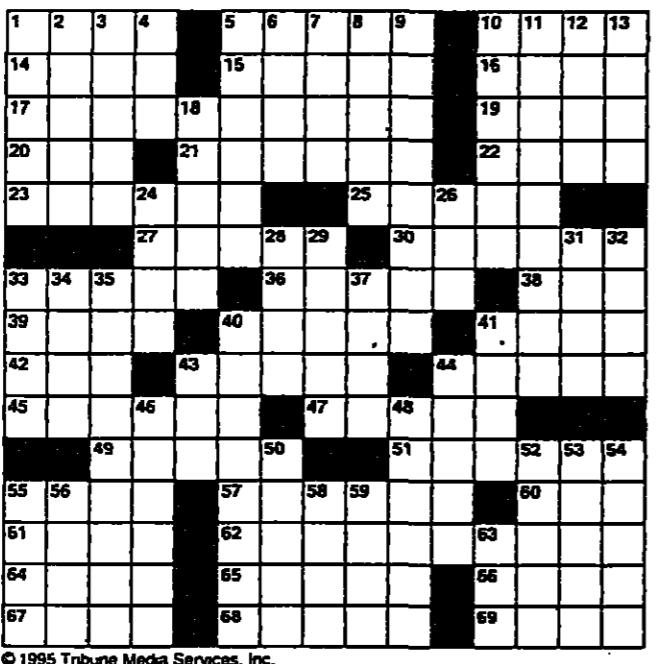
In the short-run, the budget cuts can curb growth as government hands-out to the poor and the elderly are reduced.

It is not clear how much of that "fiscal drag" will occur in 1995/96. But on the face of it, it is not all that much.

THE Daily Crossword by Mary E. Brindamour

ACROSS

- 1 Search carefully
- 5 Used a stopwatch
- 10 Dentist's request
- 14 Makes a hole in one
- 15 Meeting place of old
- 16 Pocket bread
- 17 Short ske fruit
- 19 Russia's dictator of old
- 20 Beer container
- 21 Went bad
- 22 -bitty
- 23 Sound system
- 25 Play
- 27 Beginning
- 30 Makes into law
- 33 Factions
- 36 Giant
- 38 SRO show
- 39 Feel sympathy
- 40 Play a guitar
- 41 - colada
- 42 Questioner's word
- 43 Martin of Hollywood
- 44 Like a chimney
- 45 World Cup sport
- 47 Blackball
- 49 Root used in perfume
- 51 Bring into harmony
- 55 Denver stadium height?
- 57 Skimpy
- 60 Turn down
- 61 Time periods
- 62 Certain candy
- 64 Dillon of TV
- 65 Computer command
- 66 Silver: abbr.
- 67 Simoleons
- 68 A bed of —
- 69 Antiroxins



Thursday's puzzle solved

F	L	A	P	P	L	A	T	H	B	A	B	A
I	A	G	O	L	A	U	R	A	O	R	A	N
S	L	U	M	A	S	T	O	R	R	A	K	E
T	O	E	R	R	I	H	U	M	A	N	B	U
I	O	N	D	I	S	H	E	M	A	N	T	U
M	A	D	D	H	N	E	O	N	S	E	C	U
A	G	O	G	A	B	B	I	E	C	U	S	T
T	O	R	E	A	L	L	S	C	R	E	W	U
A	R	I	C	A	L	E	B	N	E	S	S	U
A	S	T	I	R	A	S	H	T	R	A	Y	E
E	D	G	Y	O	A	R	E	D	Y	O	R	A
Y	U	U	S	E	A	C	O	M	P	E	R	T
U	S	E	A	C	O	M	P	E	R	E	R	T
E	R	S	T	S	A	G	E	S	A	E	S	T
S	T	A	G	E	S	A	G	E	S	E	S	T
Z	O	M	P	E	R	E	S	A	E	S	E	T
R	O	C	K	T	H	E	S	A	E	S	E	T
C	A	N	T	H	E	S	A	E	S	E	E	T
H	E	S	A	E	S	E	A	E	S	E	E	T
A	E	S	E	A	E	E	A	E	E	E	E	T

- 48 Cotton workers
- 49 Sweet wine
- 50 — evil, hear..."
- 52 Become one
- 53 Forty—
- 54 Over and above
- 55 Short reminder
- 56 Persia: abbr.
- 58 Flats: abbr.
- 59 Graf —
- 60 Orig. text

Yemen seeking \$1b for reforms

SANA'A (R) — A senior Yemeni official was quoted as saying his impoverished country expects to receive \$1 billion in loans and credit facilities to implement an ambitious economic reform programme.

Finance ministry under-

secretary Ahmad Ghaleb told

the official Al Thawra news-

paper that teams from the

World Bank and the Interna-

tional Monetary Fund (IMF)

were currently in Yemen to

discuss Sana'a's two-phased

reform programme.

He predicted an agreement

for \$300 million to finance

the first 15-month phase "to

stabilise the economy..."

in addition to what would be

offered by donor states and

funds saved after reschedul-

ing debts."

The second phase "will in-

volve restructuring and large

funds will be made available

by the World Bank, IMF and

other international institu-

tions in addition to donor

states," he said. "This aid

would be between \$700 mil-

lion and \$1 billion."

Yemen, among the world's

poorest countries, has a fore-

ign debt of about \$8 billion

owed mainly to the former

Soviet Union for previous

aid given.

Prime Minister Abdul Aziz

Abdul Ghani has said the

measures helped cut the fore-

cast 1995 deficit to 35 billion

rials (\$700 million) from 62

billion rials (\$1.25 billion) at

the official rate of 50 rials to

the dollar.

In July, a World Bank offi-

cials promised to triple aid to

Yemen if economic reforms

were carried out speedily, but

warned Sana'a not to expect

more support if the implemen-

tation of projects financed

by the bank was delayed.

Sana'a in March raised the

prices of petrol and basic

services, following several

rounds of talks with the bank

and the IMF on reforms.

But if they choose to do

otherwise, they will have that

much more money to spend

next year, boosting the econo-

my and the IMF on reforms.

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Abdul Ghaleb told

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Business & Finance

JORDAN TIMES, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1995

Prices gain a little; hopes high at AFM

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) economic summit that ended on Wednesday.

The weekly report of the Amman Financial Market (AFM) said turnover for the week ending Thursday was JD2.9 million, down 38 per cent from the previous week's JD4.7 million.

They said few players were active at the market, which is expected to get a boost after

AMMAN — Prices gained a little on low turnover at the Amman Financial Market (AFM) said turnover for the week ending Thursday was JD2.9 million, down 38 per cent from the previous week's JD4.7 million.

The report said 1.8 million shares changed hands under 2,089 contracts concluded

during the week, where the average daily trading was JD600,000, compared with the previous week's JD900,000.

The official AFM price index based on 60 major companies from among the 120 listed in the market closed at 158.8 points, up 0.9 points or 0.6 per cent, from the week's opening 157.9 points.

Stocks of 81 companies involved in the week's trading, with 34 firms gaining, 21 slipping and 17 remaining stable.

Brokers attributed the absence of investors and weak institutional involvement for the low turnover during the

week. "Everyone was busy with the MENA summit, with many investors actually attending the sessions of the conference for firsthand information how things are going," said a broker, who, like other AFM dealers, cannot be identified by name.

"Many in the market expect to see revived interest next week, when most investors will also be in a better position to judge which of the companies listed in the market stand to gain from the projects discussed at the summit," added the broker.

Suez Canal Authority cuts tolls by 20% after slump in traffic

CAIRO (AFP) — The Suez Canal Authority has announced that it would reduce shipping fees by 20 per cent from the start of 1996 after a drop in the number of oil tankers using the international waterway.

Mohammad Ezzat Adel, the authority's chairman, said a maximum fee of around \$500,000 would be fixed for tankers whatever their size.

He said he hoped the reduction would particularly lead to an increase in the number of oil tankers of 160,000-170,000 tonnes crossing the canal as well as other types of tankers.

The number of tankers using the canal fell by around 10 per cent from 1,396 to

1,288 in the first half of 1995 compared with the same period in 1994, according to official figures.

The total number of ships using the waterway also fell by around 10 per cent from 8,355 to 7,617 in the same period.

Tolls will remain unchanged for ships other than oil tankers for 1996 "in view of the current situation on the international maritime transport market," said Mr. Adel.

The canal's receipts, \$1.9 billion in the 1994-95 financial year, are Egypt's second most important source of foreign currency earnings, after the salaries of Egyptians working abroad but ahead of oil revenues and tourism.

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indications of membership in the countries of the Middle East and Africa.

will represent continuing multilateral help to achieve peace among their people across the region.

their vision and opportunity to be an agent partner in social and economic development through participation.

SCOPE

ER 4, 1995

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21 to June 21) complete those which you have and tonight make pay pressing bill.

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SCOPE

The NBA is back in action

Rodman moves to Bulls, O'Neal out for now

ONE PLAYER, one trade and the whole picture changes. One broken thumb and it changes again.

When Dennis Rodman took his radical rebounding act from the San Antonio Spurs to the Chicago Bulls, he jolted the Eastern Conference back to life. Not even Michael Jordan's return for a full season or Hakeem Olajuwon's quest for a third straight title is attracting such attention.

Now Chicago is the team to beat, the Western Conference isn't quite so formidable and two-time champion Houston is searching for respect all over again as the NBA season opens Nov. 3 with two new expansion teams in Canada.

"The Eastern Conference, all of the sudden, is going to be a tough battle," new Boston coach M.L. Carr said.

The Orlando Magic will find out just how tough. The Eastern Conference champion, swept by the Rockets in the NBA finals, will have to play the first two months of the season without Shaquille O'Neal, who broke his thumb in an exhibition game.

Ready to take advantage O'Neal's early absence are the Indiana Pacers, the Charlotte Hornets and the New York Knicks as well as three up-and-coming young teams.

Washington added veteran point guard Mark Price in a trade with Cleveland, Detroit hired Doug Collins to energize the Pistons and Milwaukee is looking for even more from its frontcourt duo of Glenn Robinson and Vin Baker.

"I think overall the east, from top to bottom, is going to have more parity than a year ago," Magic coach Brian Hill said.

Certainly, the Western Conference is still loaded, with San Antonio, Utah, Phoenix and Seattle all having won at least 57 games.

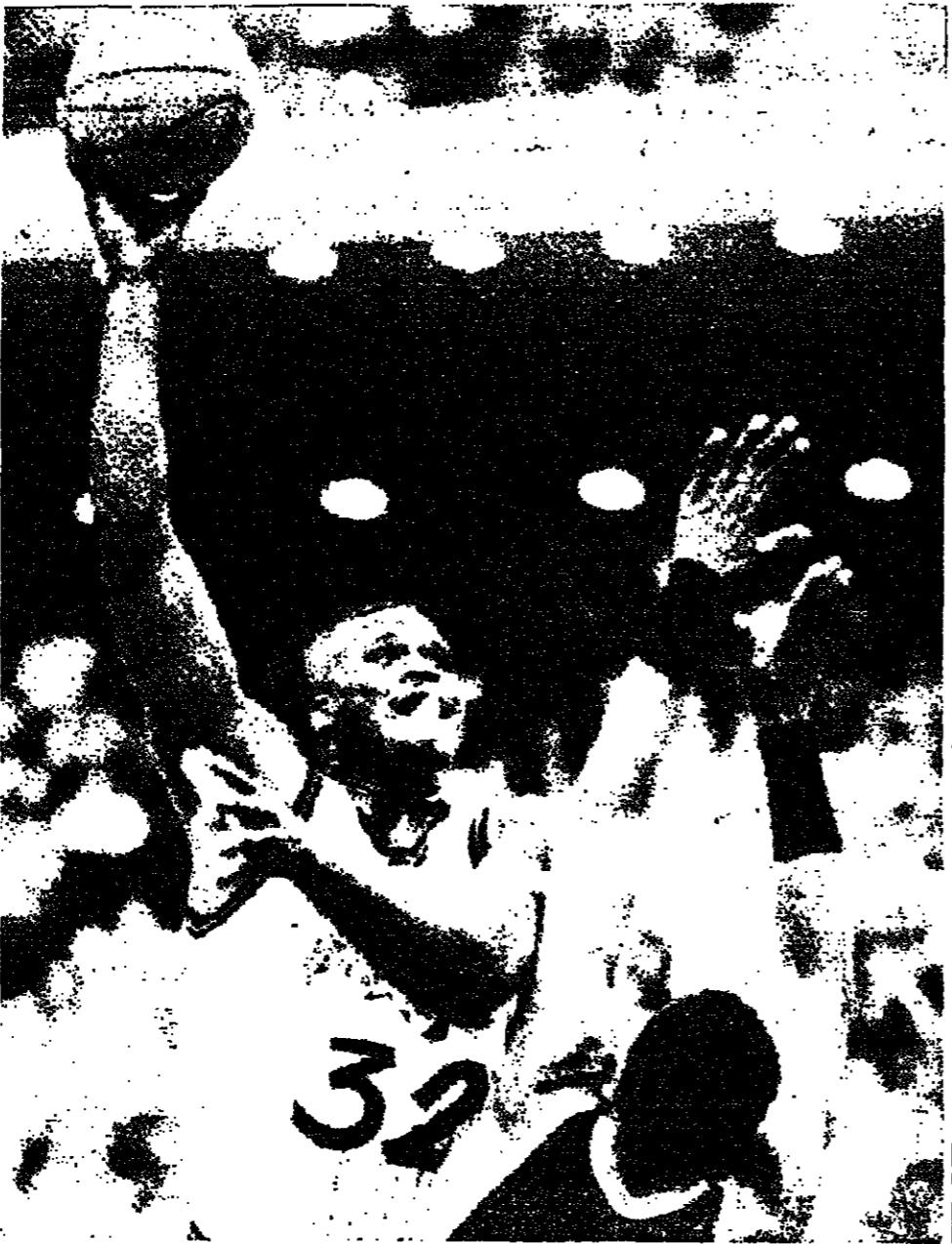
After another first-round flop, the SuperSonics are vowing to play with professionalism equal to their talent, the Los Angeles Lakers are young and hungry and the Suns' Charles Barkley is back with new teammate John "hot rod" Williams to help in the middle.

But all that may not matter, because Houston has Clyde Drexler and Hakeem Olajuwon, whose dazzling playoff performances recalled their Phi Slama Jama days at the University of Houston. Even though Olajuwon missed the preseason following elbow surgery, the Rockets are looking to become the fourth team in NBA history to win at least three consecutive titles.

But the west may no longer be best, and one big reason is Rodman.

Despite claiming his fourth consecutive rebounding title, Rodman wore out his welcome in San Antonio by missing team buses, arriving to join team huddles.

"It was a sad, sad scenario," said Spurs coach Bob Hill, who welcomed the lopsided Rodman-for-Will Perdue trade.



Orlando Magic star Shaquille O'Neal #32 will miss the first two months of the new season after breaking his thumb in an exhibition game (file photo)

interesting time for them."

Behind O'Neal and the dazzling play of Anfernee Hardaway, Orlando advanced to the finals having never won a playoff game but fizzled against the Rockets, falling in four games.

"Our returning players seem to have a little hunger left over from the finals," Hill, the Magic's coach, said. "I don't think we'll let down. I think we'll be a better basketball team. Whether we get back to the finals remains to be seen, but we'll be an improved team."

And not the only one. Miami, which entered the league a year earlier than Orlando but never had the Magic's lottery luck, went out and got itself a marquee coach instead.

Leaving New York and an aging Knicks team for sunny Miami, Pat Riley signed a five-year contract that includes \$15 million in salary, a 20 per cent ownership stake in the Heat and other lucrative benefits, an unprecedented package for a coach in any professional sport.

Whether this season would open at all was in doubt until mid-September, when the players gave their approval in a referendum to a new collective bargaining agreement. The 226-134 vote defeated an effort by some players and agents to decertify the players' union, a fight that pitted player against agent and teammate against teammate.

A few days later, NBA owners ended a 79-day-old lockout, the first labour action in the league's history.

Eastern Conference stew. "I feel very good about the challenge," said Riley, who will be hard pressed to extend his 13-season streak of 50-win seasons. "We have to develop the talent and develop the pride. It's not going to be easy, I know that."

One Heat player who took an immediate shine to Riley's philosophy of physical defense was center Matt Geiger. It was his hard foul that broke O'Neal's thumb.

Although Miami's deal for Riley and Chicago's deal for Rodman were big, the blockbuster deal of the offseason was the one reached between the league and the players' association that assures six years of labour peace.

Challenging the Bulls became much tougher for Orlando last month, when O'Neal, the league's scoring leader last season with 29.3 points a game, underwent surgery to repair his fractured right thumb. Filling in will be Jon Koncak, a free agent acquisition who has never averaged more than eight points a season.

"It will make it a lot tougher," Drexler said. "He (O'Neal) commands so much attention on offense and defense. It's going to be an

aging Knicks team for sunny Miami. Pat Riley signed a five-year contract that includes \$15 million in salary, a 20 per cent ownership stake in the Heat and other lucrative benefits, an unprecedented package for a coach in any professional sport.

By taking over a team that has only one winning season in its seven-year history, he added another pinch of spice to the

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15-year-old swimmer tests positive for steroids

COLORADO SPRINGS, Colorado (R) — A 15-year-old schoolgirl swimmer tested positive for steroids at the U.S. National Championships last August. U.S. Swimming said on Thursday. U.S. swimming, the sport's governing body, would not name the swimmer.

The positive drug test is the first for a U.S. swimmer since the 1988 U.S. Olympic trials when Angel Myers Martino tested positive for steroids and was kicked off the U.S. team.

One official indicated the swimmer is expected to be suspended for one year with the ban going into effect immediately, making the offender ineligible to compete in the March 6-12 U.S. Olympic trials in Indianapolis.

The positive result for anabolic steroids was at the U.S. Swimming National Championships at Rose Bowl aquatic centre in Pasadena, California.

The meet served as a qualifier for the Pan Pacific Games August 9-13, the first test event in the Olympic pool in Atlanta.

The news rocked U.S. Swimming, which has spent thousands of dollars in drug testing and mounted a successful campaign to ban the Chinese from the Pan Pacific Championships. China had 11 swimmers test positive during the Asian Games.

Ironically, John Leonard, executive director of the American Swimming Coaches Association, is in Hong Kong on a fact-finding mission to obtain more information on Chinese doping procedures.

Leaders Milan, Parma face lowly clubs

ROME (AP) — Up-and-down play has been the hallmark of the top Italian first-division soccer clubs this season, with none dominating in League and Cup matches.

Leaders AC Milan and AC Parma (5-2-1 in the league) shouldn't need top performances Sunday, as they both face relegation-zone clubs.

But Lazio of Rome, the league's only undefeated team, must be up for fourth-place Fiorentina.

Lazio, third at 4-4-0, followed its impressive 4-0 thrashing of defending champion Juventus of Turin last round with Tuesday's 2-1 second-leg loss against Lyon of France that eliminated the Romans from the UEFA Cup.

Conversely, Juve rebounded from the humbling loss with a 4-0 defeat of Glasgow Rangers on Wednesday to guarantee advancement in the Champions League.

With goalkeeper Luca Marchegiani out at least a

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Davenport scores 1st win in 2 months

OAKLAND (R) — Lindsay Davenport took a small step forward after a dismal summer and autumn slump by beating Tami Whitlinger-Jones 7-5, 6-1 on Thursday in the second round of the Bank of the West Classic. "I didn't come in here with a lot of confidence and when you don't have that, you don't know what shots to hit," said Davenport, who is seeded third. "But after I won the first set, I felt a lot better." In other matches, up-and-coming Al Sugiyama of Japan upset sixth-seeded Romanian Irena Spririca 6-4, 4-6, 6-1. The 20-year-old Japanese took advantage of Spririca's spotty service games and erratic groundstrokes to earn a berth in the quarter-finals against Garrison-Jackson.

King denies falsifying fight

NEW YORK (R) — Boxing promoter Don King denied Thursday at his federal mail fraud trial that he submitted a fraudulent claim to try to steal \$350,000 from Lloyds of London for training expenses after a bout was cancelled. King, 64, is on trial in Manhattan federal court charged with nine counts of insurance fraud involving in 1991 Julio Cesar Chavez fight with Harold Brazier. If convicted, King faces up to five years in prison on each count and up to \$250,000 in fines.

Atletico take on Zaragoza Sunday

MADRID (AP) — Atletico de Madrid will be looking to the goal-scoring abilities of recovered Argentine star Diego Simeone when it faces Zaragoza on Sunday, knowing a victory is almost imperative if the side is to stay clear of a buoyant No. 2 Barcelona. Simeone, who has five goals to his credit, has been out through injury for several weeks.

He joins star midfielder Jose Luis Caminero and forward Francisco "Kiko" Narvaez to make three key players coach serb Radomir Antic can count on once again. Atletico goes into the match unbeaten with 26 points from eight wins and two draws, while Zaragoza, the defending European Cup Winners Cup champion and one of Spain's snappiest teams last season, lies half-way down the 22-team table with just 14 points.

Cuba make winning start

TOKYO (AFP) — Reigning champions Cuba opened the defence of their Women's World Cup volleyball title by thrashing Kenya 3-0 on Friday. The Cuban spikers, world and Olympic champions, needed only 49 minutes to score a 15-4, 15-6, 15-2 victory, making the first step towards winning the three straight World Cup. Asian Games gold-medallists South Korea and Asian champions China got past their tough first hurdles to vie for the three tickets for the Atlanta Olympic Games next year. Chung Sun-Hye was the heroine of South Korea's 15-15, 15-12, 15-10 victory over the United States, emerging as the best scorer, winning 11 points and another nine for sideline. China also had to work hard against the Netherlands before pulling off a narrow 15-7, 16-14, 16-14 win over the European champions.

One in 4 footballers takes drugs

LONDON (AFP) — One in four young soccer players with London's professional clubs takes drugs according to a television programme to be screened on Sunday evening.

The survey, part of the London Programme, also explains that nine out of 10 players have been offered drugs, ranging from cannabis and cocaine to crack and LSD.

The revelations come at a time when soccer is still reeling from the drug confessions of Arsenal star Paul Merson.

The programme claims that Sheffield Wednesday's Chris Waddle and Chelsea and England star Dennis Wise have also been targeted by drug-pushers.

Waddle reveals that he has been offered "E's" — the slang term for the drug ecstasy.

Alan Hodson, the Football Association's director of sports medicine, when confronted with the survey results, admitted the FA may decide to review their drug-testing policy.

He said: "It certainly gives me great cause for concern."

Merson, whose Arsenal career was threatened by his cocaine addiction, talks exclusively to programme about drinking, gambling and drugs.

He tells of the devastating effect that being a junkie had on his wife and son, the humiliation of going public with his secret addiction and the long haul back to recovery.

And he reveals that the nightmare lives on today, as the spectre of his shame continues to haunt his family.

In a telling passage, Merson is asked to document his lowest moment and replies: "Probably when I threw my wife down the stairs in front of my little boy."

Leaders Milan, Parma face lowly clubs

month with a knee injury, Lazio's suspect defense will have to come to the fore, particularly against the dangerous Fiorentina attack, led by Argentine striker Gabriel Batistuta.

But it bowed out to second-division Palermo in the Italian Cup and played terribly in losing 3-0 in a first-leg second-round Cup Winners Cup match with Sweden's Halmstad.

Up and down.

Milan, coming off consecutive lackluster draws with Modena Vicenza and cross-town rival Inter, hosts 15th-place Cagliari in Sunday's night match.

Star striker Roberto Baggio has made remarkably quick recovery from his latest leg injury and will start against Cagliari. But Marco Simone (left ankle) is out.

Milan has been the closest thing to an Italian powerhouse, advancing in cup play without a problem and sharing the league lead. But it has won just one of its last four Serie A matches.

Parma is healthy and on paper shouldn't have prob-

lems at Cremonese, 17th in the 18-team league. Coach Nevio Scala's club has four wins and a draw in its last five Serie A matches.

And the Sardinians' defense (11 goals allowed) has not been good by Italian standards, despite the club's tactic of packing its backfield.

Juventus, which has slipped to sixth in the league and was knocked out of the Italian Cup by Atalanta of Bergamo, has dominated in the champions league. That's thanks in large part to rising star Alessandro Del Piero, who has a goal in each of four matches in that competition.

Coach Marcello Lippi will have his three-man attack force back on the field together Sunday at Udinese, matching Del Piero with Fabrizio Ravanelli and Gianluca Viali, who have been fighting nagging injuries.

Other matches Sunday: Bari-Atalanta; AS Roma-Padova; Sampdoria-Inter; Torino-Napoli; and Vicenza-Piacenza.

GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OMAR SHARIF & TANNAH IRISH

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WEEKLY BRIDGE QUIZ

Q. 1 - East-West vulnerable, as South you hold: A K 8 7 6 5 Q Q 5 4 3 2

The bidding has proceeded:

WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH

1 NT 2 2 2 2

PASS PASS PASS PASS

What action do you take?

Q. 2 - Both vulnerable, as South you hold: A K Q 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 A A Q

The bidding has proceeded:

EAST NORTH WEST SOUTH

1 NT 2 2 2 2

PASS PASS PASS PASS

What action do you take?

Q. 3 - As South, vulnerable, you hold: A Q 8 7 6 5 Q K J 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2

Your right-hand opponent opens the bidding with one spade. What action do you take?

The bidding has proceeded:

WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH

1 NT 2 2 2 2

PASS PASS PASS PASS

What action do you take?

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Sports

JORDAN TIMES, SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 4, 1995 11

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Chernomyrdin gets some Yeltsin powers

MOSCOW (R) — Russian Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin said on Friday he had assumed partial control over key ministers while President Boris Yeltsin recovers from a heart attack.

He said he has been "coordinating" the work of the ministers of defence, security, foreign and the interior — the first admission that Mr. Yeltsin has given up some presidential powers.

The four, known as Russia's "power ministers," report directly to Yeltsin, who was rushed to hospital on Oct. 26 after his second mild heart attack in less than four months.

"The president has to be partially relieved of these duties to give him a better chance to recover," Mr. Chernomyrdin told a news conference after seeing Mr. Yeltsin in hospital. "But of course we seek the president's advice on all key questions."

The 57-year-old prime minister, who under the constitution would take over as temporary head of state if Mr. Yeltsin was incapacitated,

said, "I am glad Boris Nikolayevich is getting better and is working on documents."

Asked if it was Mr. Yeltsin who asked him to take over some control of the 'power' ministers, the premier replied: "I could see it in his eyes that Chernomyrdin should work harder."

Mr. Yeltsin, in his first meeting with the prime minister at Moscow's Central Clinical Hospital, also discussed the torrid campaign for the Dec. 17 election.

The Kremlin chief called for fair play in the run-up to December parliamentary elections that have been thrown into chaos by a decision to ban the leading Liberal Party Yabloko.

Meanwhile, Yabloko leader Grigory Yavlinsky appealed to the supreme court to overturn the electoral ban.

"Yabloko is defending the people's right to choose, the right to have free elections and ... after all the right to bring about a legal change of power," Mr. Yavlinsky told the single judge.

Lubbers confirms NATO candidacy

THE HAGUE (AFP) — Former Dutch Prime Minister Ruud Lubbers formally announced his candidacy Friday for the post of NATO secretary general in a move which would appear to strengthen his position as firm favourite to take over the reins of the Atlantic alliance.

In a statement published here, the Dutch government said Mr. Lubbers had indicated he was "available" to take up the top civilian job at the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) and had "agreed to be a candidate."

"It's in the bag," one diplomat said here of the Lubbers candidacy. "The Dutch must have got a green light from the Americans for their candidate otherwise they would never have gone ahead like that after weeks of secret negotiations."

The announcement was made after Mr. Lubbers returned from a series of consultations with top U.S. officials in Washington, telling reporters at Amsterdam's

Schiphol airport that "they were good meetings."

Mr. Lubbers' main rival for the post, former Danish Foreign Minister Uffe Ellermann-Jensen, was also in Washington to meet senior officials Friday, and still appears to have the backing of certain elements within the U.S. State Department.

In Copenhagen on Friday, U.S. ambassador to Denmark Edward Elson was quoted in the conservative daily *Jyllands-Posten* as strongly recommending Mr. Ellermann-Jensen as the perfect candidate.

The Dane had breakfast with U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher Friday and was due to visit the White House later in the day, as Mr. Cubbers had done Thursday.

But Mr. Ellermann-Jensen's chances were considered to have been dashed after he criticised France for resuming nuclear testing, since when Paris has strongly opposed the Danish candidate and supported Mr. Lubbers.

Jewish settlers urge Palestinians to open new era in relations

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (Agencies) — Jewish settlers' leaders on Friday launched an unprecedented appeal to Palestinians to end their differences and share the lands hotly disputed by both sides.

In a letter to the Palestinian daily *Al Nahar*, four moderate rabbis from West Bank settlements urged the Palestinian people to "turn a new page in their relations."

Al Nahar, published in East Jerusalem, splashed the letter on its front page and devoted a whole inside page to the text.

Zaki Nusseibeh, a specialist on Israeli affairs for the paper, who edited the text, said it was a "revolution." "They are calling on us to open a new chapter in our relations, to share the territories and the water."

Rabbi Menahem Fruman from the Tekoa settlement wrote: "The Israeli occupation of the territories is dead and will lead the settlers and the Palestinians to a new era of cooperation."

He said he had tried to visit Gaza many times but was refused entry by the Israeli army.

Rabbi Yoel Bin-Nun, from Ofra, in the north of the West Bank, said "The solution to our conflict is to set up an Israeli-Palestinian confederation."

"We are closer to you than the Jordanians or any other people in the region. The settlers don't want to dominate another people."

"Most of the settlers did not come to punish the Palestinian nation or to judge the Palestinians. They love

the land, all the land... as the Palestinians do."

Palestinians ultimately want Israel to relinquish its hold over the Jewish settlements.

"The Palestinian people and its leadership will not accept settlers as they are now living in the West Bank," said Ahmad Tibi, a close aide to PNA President Yasser Arafat. "The Palestinian sovereignty has to include the settlements as well."

The Jewish settlers are concerned that the interim period of Palestinian autonomy in the West Bank cities will undermine their safety.

Rabbi Yoel Bin-Nun, one of the founders of the settler movement, told *Al Nahar* that neither people should rule the other.

He said he opposed Israeli occupation of Palestinians living in the West Bank but warned that "if the Palestinian government will take control over the settlements, things will explode and nobody wants that."

Rabbi Fruman said an existing settler-Palestinian dialogue was already leading to some collaboration.

Palestinians and settlers agreed to cooperate to stop the building of the bypass roads that Israel is building for the settlers to allow them to drive around Arab cities. Rabbi Fruman said.

Palestinians oppose the roads because they are being built on land confiscated from private Arab owners, while these settlers oppose a separation of the two peoples.

COLUMN 8

British pensioner fails in appeal over shooting

LONDON (R) — British newspapers and politicians reacted angrily Friday to an appeal court ruling that an 83-year-old should pay £4,000 (\$6,300) to a man he shot in a raid on the pensioner's leased vegetable patch.

Ted Newberry, who fired his shotgun from his potting shed in 1983 and hit the burglar, 29-year-old Mark Revill, causing him injuries which have left permanent scars.

Angela Knight, Conservative member of parliament for Newberry's home town of Ilkeston in central England, protested: "The law has been shown up to be an ass by the judges."

The Sun, a popular tabloid which has organised a readership appeal to help Newberry pay the money, said: "It is a monstrous injustice which will enrage all right-thinking people."

Revill received a 4-1/2 month prison sentence for breaking into Newberry's greenhouse. He told the court the injuries meant he was confined to his cell for 23 hours a day.

Alec Baldwin disputes facts of alleged fight

LOS ANGELES (R) — Actor Alec Baldwin, accused last week of punching a photographer and breaking his nose, Wednesday disputed the lensman's version of the fracas.

Baldwin was arrested last Thursday for allegedly punching freelance photographer Alan Zanger as he tried to take pictures of the star and his actress wife Kim Basinger as they arrived home with their newborn daughter, Ireland Eliesse. "I dispute what he says," Baldwin said when he appeared on NBC's "Tonight Show With Jay Leno."

He said he spotted Mr. Zanger in a van outside his home when he drove his wife and first-born child home from hospital. "I ran in the house to get some shaving cream and sprayed it on his windows so he couldn't shoot out. I was saying 'let's have some laughs.' That's when he got out the car..."

said Baldwin, who starred Sunday as macho Stanley Kowalski in a CBS television version of the Tennessee Williams play *A Streetcar Named Desire*. The 51-year-old photographer complained his nose was broken. Local TV station KNBC interviewed Mr. Zanger Wednesday in Hollywood and he repeated his allegations. "I think Alec should tell the truth. I did nothing wrong. I was in a legal parking space. Alec is completely in the wrong. (He was) in a rage and beat the hell out of me."

The Los Angeles City attorney's office is reviewing a police report about the alleged attack to decide whether to charge Baldwin with battery, that carries a maximum sentence of six months in jail and a \$1,000 fine.

Prison officials held after forcing jailed boy to marry

DHAKA (AFP) — Two officials of Bangladesh's southern Barisal Jail were arrested after allegedly forcing a 15-year-old boy detained there to marry a woman seven years his senior, a newspaper reported.

Masud Alam, who had refused to marry the woman, filed a lawsuit against the jail superintendent, the marriage registrar and seven others as soon as he was freed on bail Oct. 25, the daily *Al Mujaddid* said.

Italians prepare to try Priebe

ROME (Agencies) — Military prosecutors in Rome said Friday they were stepping up preparations so they can try former Nazi Erich Priebke as quickly as possible after he is extradited here from Argentina.

Chief Military Prosecutor Antonio Intelisano said his office was still awaiting confirmation from Argentina of the extradition.

The Argentine Supreme Court accepted Thursday Italy's demand for the one-time SS captain, who will be tried here for his part in the massacre of 335 Italians more than half a century ago.

"We are in the process of making preparations independently of the extradition to start as quickly as possible the jurisdictional phase to get the trial opened," Mr. Intelisano said.

He said the former Nazi would be held in preventive detention upon his arrival in Italy.

Mr. Priebke, who has lived in the southwestern Argentine resort town of San Carlos de Bariloche for the past 46 years, has acknowledged taking part in the March 22, 1944, Ardeatine Caves killings of 335 Italian civilians including 77 Jews in reprisal for an attack on the German army.

Mr. Priebke has admitted killing "one or two" of the hostages and said he agreed with the orders to execute the others.

The extradition could lead to Italy's most emotional war crimes trial in decades.

"It will be a day of light for justice, a day of sunlight," said former Justice Minister Giovanni Conso, who signed an international arrest warrant for Priebke after he was discovered living in Argentina in 1994.

The Argentine court's decision ended 17 months of legal wrangling and overturned the decision of an appeals court in August to rule against his extradition.

The previous ruling outraged Italy, Germany and the Jewish community and fuelled charges that Argentina was still a haven for Nazis.

"What is most important is that (Argentina) has recognised Italy's right to have the chance to put on trial a person who took part in one of the worst human tragedies," Mr. Conso told Italian Radio.

Tulia Zevi, president of Italy's Jewish communities, welcomed the Argentine supreme court's decision.

"The extradition of Priebke is positive for the image of both Italy, which seeks justice for its victims, and for Argentina, which in past showed too much tolerance in accepting and supporting tens, if not hundreds, of Nazis and escaping fascists," she said.

Mr. Priebke says he acted on the orders of Gestapo chief Herbert Kappler when he took part in the reprisal murders. The victims, most of them members of the Italian resistance, were bound and shot in the back of the neck.

Iraq praises UAE president's call for end to U.N. sanctions

BAGHDAD (R) — Iraq heaped praise on Friday for Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahayan of the United Arab Emirates (UAE) who has said the time for Arab reconciliation and the lifting of sanctions against Baghdad has come.

"Arab Wasahan Sheikh Zayed Ben Sultan Al Nahayan in Baghdad," declared the ruling Baath Party newspaper *Al Thawra* in a banner headline.

In conciliatory remarks last month Sheikh Zayed, whose country joined the U.S.-led alliance against Iraq in the 1991 Gulf war, urged Arab countries to "try to turn the page of the past and cooperate" to alleviate the suffering of the Iraqi people under U.N. sanctions.

Al Thawra interpreted his remarks by saying that Sheikh Zayed was telling the Iraqis that he shared their suffering and that they were not alone in efforts to find a way out.

Since Iraq recognised Kuwait within new borders demarcated by the United Nations, Baghdad has tried

to improve relations with Gulf Arabs.

Iraqi officials say they have partly succeeded with Qatar, Oman and Bahrain, and Sheikh Zayed's remarks were bound to help melt the remaining ice.

Iraqi president Saddam Hussein was congratulated by Sheikh Zayed on his overwhelming victory in last month's referendum in which he was the sole candidate and won 99.96 per cent of the vote.

The official press said on Friday that the Arab League's secretary-general, Esmat Abdul Meguid, who endorsed Sheikh Zayed's call, would soon tour Arab countries to prepare the ground for pan-Arab reconciliation.

Tunisian Foreign Minister Habib Ben Yahia visited Baghdad on Wednesday and discussed Arab reconciliation with Iraq.

Israel denies trying to delay new Syria talks

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Israel on Friday denied Syrian accusation that it was trying to put off a resumption of peace negotiations with Syria until April.

Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin "is ready to resume talks tomorrow, on condition that the Syrians respect the commitments they have made on this issue during talks with the United States," said Mr. Rabin's spokeswoman Aliza Goren.

"It is completely untrue that Israel wants to delay the negotiations and that a message on this has been sent via the intermediary" of U.S. Secretary of State Warren Christopher, she added.

The Syrians who are putting up obstacles to a negotiations by putting off a meeting of military experts due to follow that of the chiefs of staff.

The countries two chiefs of staff last met in Washington, after an earlier meeting in December. But since then the talks have ground to a halt, despite U.S. efforts to bring both sides back to the negotiating table.

Syrian Foreign Minister Farouk Al Sharqai on Thursday accused Israel of trying to delay a resumption of the talks until April, saying the request had been put to Syrian President Hafez Al Assad in talks Monday with Mr. Christopher in Damascus.

This suggested that some bombers were still at large.

The bombings have been indirectly claimed by the GIA, which is fighting the military-backed regime in Algeria and objects to French support for the Algerian government.

Khalil, 24, was gunned down by police on Sept. 29 in

a hamlet also called Maison Blanche, west of Lyon.

Police said the fingerprints of

Bensaid, who was arrested after allegedly ordering the bombing of a busy market in Ville, northern France, next Sunday, were "of the same family" as those on the canister.

But police said they would await an expert opinion to be certain.

Police added, however, that other fingerprints found during probes of eight bombings or attempted bombings since the July 11 murder of Sheikh Abdul Baki Sahraoui, imam of a Paris mosque and the moderate co-founder of Algeria's banned Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), did not match any of those of other arrested suspects.

This suggested that some bombers were still at large.

The bombings have been indirectly claimed by the GIA, which is fighting the military-backed regime in Algeria and objects to French support for the Algerian government.

Mr. Christopher in Damascus.

And that has meant combining the ranks of the country's managerial elite for like-minded deputies and future ministers who can help Ms. Ciller realise her ambitious goal of overthrowing Turkey's state-dominated economy.

The prime minister wants to see a dynamic and young team close to her. Anatolian news agency quoted former privatisations chief Ufuk Soleymez, who has joined DYP, as saying on Friday.

This, say analysts, reflects

NEWS IN BRIEF

Judges defend waitress's tight pants

CAIRO (AFP) — An Egyptian court rejected a complaint by an officer from the country's morals police who charged a waitress with offending public decency for wearing tight leggings, a newspaper said Friday. The court in Cairo ruled that the pants, worn by the girl in a restaurant in the centre of the capital, were in vogue and it was a matter of personal taste, the government daily *Al Akbar* said.

Four killed in storm in Saudi Arabia

RIYADH (AFP) — Four people were killed and several others injured in Saudi Arabia's worst storm in 30 years which ravaged havoc in the east of the kingdom, the official daily *Al Ryad* said Friday. The storm, accompanied by heavy rain and hail, led to warehouse fires in the port of Jeddah, causing \$6.5 million damage, flooded streets and ports, another official newspaper *Okaz*, said. The authorities in Jeddah maintained a state of emergency on Friday as they began to repair the damage after Thursday's storm, which reached a speed of 40 knots.

Son of candidate attacks father's rival

CAIRO (AFP) — The son of a parliamentary candidate in Egypt's ruling party was arrested for shooting at his father's rival in the election campaign on Friday, police sources said. Nuh, the son of candidate Ibrahim Maqid, along with a band of his father's supporters, attacked the home of Zaki Abdul Fattah in the northern Nile Delta town of Ashmun, 50 kilometres north of Cairo, police said. Mr. Abdul Fattah, a candidate for the liberal opposition Wafd Party, escaped uninjured but a passer-by was wounded and Mr. Abdul Fattah's car was damaged. Nuh and two of his accomplices were arrested, police said. Brawls and gunplay are a common sideshow in Egyptian elections, especially in rural areas.

Lebanese beauty queen could be dethroned